

# Parishsoft Offerings

Newsletter for ParishSOFT Users & Friends

## FEATURE ARTICLE: ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE

### Gulf Parish Emerges from Katrina's Wrath

Evacuate your workplace... evacuate your homes.... one can hardly comprehend the trauma of such an exodus. But parish secretary Patsy Bishop had a plan for survival when she left her office at St. Thomas the Apostle in Long Beach, Mississippi that day in late August. "I backed up all my documents, my financial data, and my ParishSOFT data to an external hard drive. I took it with me when I left the office for the last time," said Bishop. "But I did forget the power cords, the software, and my Diocesan Directory."

"All of our paper records are just gone," she calmly states. "Every marriage in progress folder is lost. All of our forms are gone. Every checkbook — gone! I didn't even have our account number." With the banks inundated with customers in the same situation, parish accounts were inaccessible for days. But it couldn't be helped. In those frantic and frightening hours before the storm, there simply wasn't time to remember everything.

Working from a temporary office in her bedroom at home, Patsy Bishop is putting the pieces of St. Thomas the Apostle back together. She still has no land line phone service, although it has been more



St. Thomas the Apostle's Buildings are Gone, but the Church's True Foundation has Never Been Stronger.

than a month since Hurricane Katrina stormed up the Mississippi coast. Katrina made rubble of their gulfside church, parish life center, and school. Strong gusts shredded church and school records and scattered them without mercy.

St. Thomas is undergoing the greatest ministry challenge it has ever seen and emerging victorious. "Our parish has come together in an incredible way. It's just been wonderful," says Bishop. "We've been holding services in a Lutheran church and reconnecting each day with our families — some of whom we haven't seen in weeks." Through just word of mouth and a website posting for *Volunteers Needed*, St. Thomas is now a living demonstration of stewardship.

Volunteers from across the country and the Naval

Construction Battalion Center in nearby Gulfport have worked around the clock, seven days a week, to construct a temporary church and school in a former

*continued on page 3*

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### Manage Temporary Addresses for Displaced Families

If the unthinkable does happen, use the extra address tabs in Family Directory to keep in touch with each family in your database. As families settle into temporary addresses, add their new information to the Other address tab on the Family Information screen. Set the Primary Address field to Other or use the Snowbird From/To dates to automatically redirect mail and phone calls for a specific period of time. See Update Snowbird Addresses on page 74 of the *Family Directory User Guide* for step-by-step instructions.



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER

A parish with the spirit of stewardship as its mission is vibrant and alive. It quickly learns that because it has been blessed abundantly, it can, in turn, graciously give back generously to its community. Nowhere is this more evident than through adversity, such as the challenges caused by Hurricane Katrina. Our feature story highlights St. Thomas the Apostle parish in Long Beach, Mississippi, and the renewed spirit of community they discovered after Katrina demolished the physical presence of their church.

In Louisiana, another parish faced the consequences of Katrina, and they too survived because of their strong spirit of Community. Twenty years ago, St. Peter Claver Parish, located in the center of a poverty-stricken district of New Orleans, was slated for closure. But thanks to a modern day miracle, the downtrodden souls did the impossible — and turned the parish around.

They tackled this task using the lessons of Matthew's gospel of the "Good and Faithful Servant," and went on to become Archbishop Hughe's "Poster Parish" for stewardship. The secret to their success was the implementation of ten practical initiatives they call *The Charisms of a Stewardship Parish*:

1. Public commitment by parish leaders
2. Strong stewardship conversion committee
3. Unceasing spiritual formation and education
4. Annual time, talent & treasure renewals
5. Total stewardship financial plan
6. Tithed offertory collection
7. Comprehensive communication system
8. Aggressive hospitality program
9. Eucharistic-centered prayer life
10. *Diakonia* commitment to service in community.

When Hurricane Katrina's flooding temporarily closed the church campus, it did not deter parish leadership from building on its scarce resources and giving food, shelter, and most importantly, a spiritual fountain back to their Community. So from their abundance, they could now give in this time of tragedy.

The lesson of stewardship is to look beyond ourselves, for we never know when we will be called to give to others. Like Jesus' parable of the talents in the Gospel of Matthew 25:20-24, the people of St. Peter Claver who "had received five talents came forward bringing an additional five...the Master said, 'Well done, my good and faithful servant. Come, share your master's joy.'"

*Deacon David Rosenberg*

## ENHANCEMENTS



ParishSOFT proudly presents version 3.5 Church Management Software! Save time, save money, and be even more efficient managing your church or school! 3.5 gives you more flexibility in managing your pledges and contributions, religious education program, family data, and time and talent ministry assignments. Don't miss the complete list of enhancements and update installation instructions, available at <http://www.parishsoft.com/support/guides.htm>.

### Family Directory Module

- Customize date when member advances to the next grade
- Enter sacrament data faster in synchronizing parishes
- Update matrimony fields automatically
- Export to .csv file.

classes. Year, session, and class sorting now includes *Grade*.

### Offering & Tuition Module

- Access families and batches from the *Pledge* screen
- Calculate total pledge based on desired payment schedule
- Export posted contributions for a specific batch
- Set batches to new "Hidden" state
- View batches by date range

- Post to synchronizing diocesan funds in batches
- Track diocesan appeal target amounts
- View family pledge history for one or all funds for one or all years.

### Time & Talent Module

- Track ministry leaders using new Ministry Role category
- Open your Liturgical Scheduler — *Liturgy* is now the default selection.

### Religious Education Module

- Smarter sorting in all list views and in "tree view" of REP years, sessions, and



## TO SERVE YOU BETTER

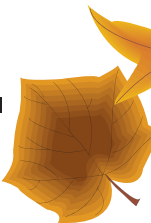


**ParishSOFT.com**

**Our website has taken on some exciting new changes! We hope you'll browse through and take a look at our:**

- New homepage and design throughout
- Sign-up for Web-ex online guided tour
- Search box on homepage
- Easy sign-up for teletraining classes
- Product information page for each module
- Support request forms for website or email setup
- Information and demo request forms
- Meet the team
- User guides
- Teletraining manuals
- Site map.

Updated user guides and teletraining manuals for version 3.5 are coming soon!



## DID YOU KNOW?

### Disaster Plan and Recovery

Is your parish prepared for the unthinkable? Good business practices along with the ParishSOFT tools already installed with your software can minimize any losses in the event of a natural or man-made disaster.

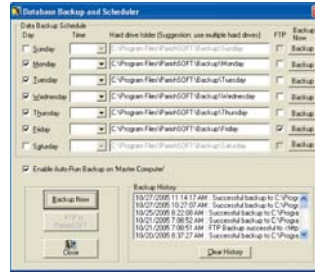
**Establish a regular backup schedule for your organization.** (For step-by-step instructions, see *Back Up Your ParishSOFT Database* on page 13 of the *Family Directory User Guide*. The guide is available at <http://www.parihssoft.com/Documentation>.

- Schedule automatic backups of your ParishSOFT database and other important network data. (Click your About menu > ParishSOFT System Info

> Perform Backup button).

- Store one backup per week in an offsite location, such as ParishSOFT's secure FTP server, external drive, or CD. With regular FTP backup, ParishSOFT will always be able to get your valuable parish data to you when you need it.
- Check your backup files regularly to ensure that the backup is performing properly.
- Back up each other with information and office procedures to ensure that YOU are not the only person who knows where everything is.

**Store your parish bank account numbers** directly in your ParishSOFT database, right in the Fund Details. For Offering & Tuition Module users, click the Add/Edit/



The Backup Schedule for this Parish Includes Regular Offsite Backups each Thursday to ParishSOFT's Secure FTP Site.

Delete Funds button, choose your fund, and click the Add Bank Account button.

If your account paperwork is ever lost or destroyed, your account numbers will still be available in your database backup file. Your administrator can secure the account information by assigning user privileges only to those staff members who need access to Contributions/Pledge data. ■

### A TESTIMONIAL

*"We have been using ParishSOFT Family Directory, Offering & Tuition, Time & Talent, Religious Education, and Web Solutions for about a year, and have found the company and the software products to be superior in all respects. The products are easy-to-learn and are very user-friendly. But the most impressive area of our relationship with ParishSOFT is the technical support and customer support staff. The persons involved are courteous, friendly, and very patient. The online training is excellent and resolves most issues for new software users."*

*"I cannot say enough positive things about the customer relationship that ParishSOFT fosters, and this, with the excellence of its products, makes this company stand out from the crowd."*

Joseph Kim, Business Manager  
Queen of the World Parish  
St. Mary's, PA

## FEATURE ARTICLE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

skating rink about 2 ½ miles north of the Gulf of Mexico — out of reach of Katrina's wrath. "The first five to six blocks of Long Beach, from the coast inland, were gutted," explains Bishop. "The K of C bought the rink property and loaned it to the church. It's just been overwhelming — our volunteers are a Godsend."

The result of their labors are incredible. The children of St. Thomas the Apostle returned to school on Monday October 3, just 35 days after Katrina obliterated their classrooms. ParishSOFT has provided Patsy Bishop with a new set of ParishSOFT software CDs, so she can restore her backup database of family and member data, sacramental records, religious education program data, ministry assignments, and financial

records. But it will be at least another three weeks before anyone can return to a physical parish office.

Unfortunately, not all churches were so prepared. Some evacuated without a database backup or records of any kind. Their recovery will include not just new building construction, but reconstruction of their databases as well. Countless sacramental records, formerly stored at church offices, are lost forever.

The people of St. Thomas are returning to the Long Beach area to regroup and rebuild. Parishioners may find comfort in knowing that their records have survived. Their church still knows who they are, when their children were baptized, and whether their sons and daughters are

scheduled to altar serve at their temporary church in December.

Although St. Thomas lost their church buildings to Katrina, they have discovered a new sense of community — a spirit that was really there all the time — one that no hurricane could ever demolish. Patsy Bishop lost nearly everything at her parish, yet she expresses nothing but gratitude for the overwhelming response that has risen from the rubble.

Katrina, despite her wrath, could not disrupt the mission and spirit of this parish. St. Thomas the Apostle moves forward, with an inspiring faith, love, and sense of community. ■

If you would like to help the rebuilding efforts of Catholic parishes in the Gulf region, please visit [www.biloxidiocese.org](http://www.biloxidiocese.org) or [www.stthomaschurchlb.org](http://www.stthomaschurchlb.org).

Donations specifically for St. Thomas the Apostle parish can be sent to:

**Rebuilding St. Thomas Fund**  
P.O. Box 1529  
Long Beach, MS 39560



## DEAR TRISH

**Q. I'm dreading the New Year. How will I ever get those end-of-year contribution statements out to our parishioners on time? Can you help?**

A. Don't panic! Your question is common this time of year, and your software has tools to help you validate your records and send those statements in time for tax season. ParishSOFT's contribution statements were specifically designed to make the year-end process easier for your office staff, and they meet IRS requirements as well. I've listed a few year-end survival tips below, but your best bet is to visit <http://www.parishsoft.com/support/faqs.htm> and print our complete step-by-step End-of-Year Checklist.

### 5 Tips for Year-End Survival

1. Print your Parish Census Roster report to find and fix blank name or address fields in your family data before sending out any statements. This quick audit can save you time and money.
2. Click your Add/Edit/Delete Funds button in your Offering & Tuition Module and examine your funds. Are fund names clear and accurate? Are tax deductible and nondeductible funds marked appropriately?
3. Post all tax-deductible contributions received before December 31, 2005 with the correct

donation date — only postings with 2005 dates will be included on 2005 contribution statements.

4. Create your statements. Click ParishSOFT Reports > Contribution Reports Menu > EOY Contrib Statement for Families.
  - a. Set the year and sorting options; use the Print All checkbox to print statements for all families or for an individual family.
  - b. Modify text for parishioner statements (click Select Body of Statement button, edit, and save your changes).
  - c. Click the Recalculate button.
  - d. Print statements (click either the Print Dtl Stmt button or the Print Sum Stmnts button).
5. Make an archival backup of your data and store it in a secure location with your other financial data for 2005.

**Q. It's tough to keep families updated with home and email address changes. Is there a better way to manage this type of audit?**

A. While you're sending those end-of-year contribution statements, why not tuck a *Populated Registration Form*, along with a short letter requesting updates, into the same envelope? These registration forms print with the existing family and



member data from your database, making it easy for parishioners to spot and correct any inaccuracies. (Click ParishSOFT Reports > Census Menu > Other Reports > Family Registration Forms).

**Q. I really need some of those new features in version 3.5 to manage my contribution batch postings more effectively! How can I be sure I'm running the latest software?**

A. From your ParishSOFT application, click the About menu. The version number is listed at the top of the screen, just below the product name. If you are running an older version, please visit <http://www.parishsoft.com/support/guides.htm> and download the Update Guide appropriate for the version you are currently running. The Update Guide will take you step-by-step through the update process.

**Do you have a question for our support team?**

Please email us at [support@parishsoft.com](mailto:support@parishsoft.com) or call us at 866.930.4774 x2. ■

## PARISHSOFT NOTES

Our support call response system ensures that the highest number of possible calls are answered directly by a support representative. Because we do not allow customers to remain "on hold," the rest of our calls are returned within the hour. We want to better our service and avoid callbacks whenever possible, so we are working to improve our response rate by making our software more intuitive and easy-to-use, providing more self-help resources on our website, improving our staff availability, and more. As always, we appreciate your suggestions.

We welcome our new parish and diocesan customers! (See listing on page 5.) Thank you to those who have spoken highly of us and referred us to other parishes. We especially thank the parishes that hosted a ParishSOFT Educational Seminar for their neighboring parishes.

## SHARE YOUR BEST PRACTICES WITH OTHER READERS

How are you using ParishSOFT software to further your ministries? We would like to hear how our technology has simplified your business processes, helped you to communicate better with your staff or parishioners, or improved the financial stability of your parish or diocese.

To share your story, please call Patrice at 866.930.4774 x142 or email [info@parishsoft.com](mailto:info@parishsoft.com).

## CHRISTMAS 2005 MESSAGE



As we look back this time of year, we are grateful to God for His many blessings: for our company, for each other, and for YOU our customers. We hope and pray our product has made your lives a little easier, and given you more time to do the Lord's work and minister to others. We at ParishSOFT wish you JOY this Christmas season and all throughout the New Year. 

# WELCOME NEW DIOCESES AND PARISHES!

## ParishSOFT Customers, since July 1, 2005

### **Diocese of Atlanta, GA**

All Saints  
Christ our Hope  
Christ Redeemer  
Good Samaritan  
OL LaSalette  
St Andrew  
St Anthony  
St Boniface Mission  
St Brendan  
St Catherine  
St Clement  
St Francis  
St Helena  
St John Nuemann  
St Joseph Maronite  
St Luke  
St Mark  
St Mary  
St Michael  
St Paul Apostle

### **Diocese of Salt Lake City, UT**

Blessed Sacrament  
Cathedral of Madeliene  
Immaculate Conception  
OL Guadalupe  
OL Lourdes  
Sacred Heart  
St Ambrose  
St Ann  
St Catherine  
St Francis Xavier  
St John Baptist  
St Joseph  
St Martin de Porres  
St Mary Assumption  
St Olaf  
St Patrick  
St Pius X  
St Therese  
St Thomas More  
St Vincent  
Sts Peter & Paul

### **Diocese of Kansas City, St Joseph, MO**

Blessed Sacrament  
Church of Annunciation  
Holy Cross  
Holy Family  
Immaculate Conception  
OL Guadalupe  
OL Lourdes  
OL Peace  
OL Sorrows  
Sacred Heart  
San Felipe  
St Ann  
St Bridget  
St Charles Borromeo  
St Columban  
St Francis Xavier  
St Gregory  
St James  
St John LaLande  
St Joseph

St Martin de Porres  
St Mary  
St Munchin  
St Patrick  
St Peter  
St Raphael  
St Rose Lima  
St Therese

### **Diocese of Sioux Falls, SD**

Cathedral St Joseph  
Holy Rosary  
OL Guadalupe  
Risen Savior  
Sacred Heart  
St Joseph Cathedral  
St Lambert  
St Therese  
St Thomas Apostle

### **Diocese of Metuchen, NJ**

Holy Angels  
Holy Family  
Holy Spirit  
La Asuncion  
Mary Mother of God  
Most Holy Rosary  
Sacred Heart Jesus  
St Charles Borromeo  
St Elizabeth Ann Seton  
St Frances Cabrini  
St Joseph

### **Alabama**

Christ the King, Daphne

### **Arkansas**

OL Holy Souls, Little Rock

### **California**

OL Perpetual Help, Downey  
St Anthony, Oakland  
St Bartholomew, San Mateo  
St Gregory Great, San Diego  
St Jude, Marina  
St Juliana Falconieri, Fullerton  
St Patrick, Kerman

### **Connecticut**

Most Holy Trinity, Pomfret

### **Illinois**

Holy Family, Waukegan  
St Peter, Fort Wayne

### **Indiana**

St Aloysius, Yoder  
St Patrick, Walkerton  
St Pius X, Granger

### **Louisiana**

Holy Family Church, Franklinton  
OL Good Counsel, Lake Charles  
St Phillip Neri, Kinder

### **Maryland**

St Francis Assisi, Brunswick

### **Massachusetts**

Corpus Christi, Lawrence  
Diocese of Worcester, Worcester  
Holy Family, Amesbury  
Holy Family, Gloucester  
Most Blsd Sacrament, Wakefield  
Notre Dame, Southbridge  
Sacred Heart, East Boston  
Sacred Heart, Malden  
Sacred Heart, Quincy  
St Adelaide, Peabody  
St Ann, Quincy  
St Bonaventure, Manomet  
St Edward Confessor, Medfield  
St Irene, Carlisle  
St John Evangelist, Wellesley  
St Joseph, Belmont  
St Joseph, Medford  
St Luke Evangelist, Westboro  
St Patrick, Watertown  
St Peter, Plymouth

### **Michigan**

Holy Cross, Marine City  
St Cyril Jerusalem, Taylor  
St Dominic Mission, Clinton  
St Gabriel, Detroit  
St John Neumann, Canton

### **Minnesota**

Risen Savior, Burnsville  
St Katharine Drexel, Ramsey

### **Mississippi**

St John Evangelist, Gulfport

### **Nebraska**

North American Martyrs, Lincoln  
St Joseph, Lincoln  
St Margaret Parish, Omaha

### **New Jersey**

Annunciation, Paramus  
Assumption of BVM, Hackettstown  
Christ the King, Manville  
Holy Cross, Trenton  
Holy Family, Carteret  
Holy Trinity Parish, Perth Amboy  
Most Holy Redeemer, Old Bridge  
Nativity of Our Lord, Monroe Twp.  
OL Czestochowa, South Plainfield  
OL Holy Angels, Little Falls  
OL Mercy, South Bound Brook  
OL Mt Carmel, New Brunswick  
OL Mt Carmel, Woodbridge  
OL Fatima, Perth Amboy  
OL Hungary, Perth Amboy  
Queenship of Mary, Plainsboro  
Resurrection, Marmora  
St Ambrose, Old Bridge  
St Bartholomew, East Brunswick  
St John Evangelist, Lambertville  
St John Vianney, Colonia  
St Joseph, Washington  
St Lawrence, Laurence Harbor  
St Luke, North Plainfield  
St Magdalen Pazzi, Flemington

St M. Czestochowa, Bound Brook  
St Mary Ostrabrama, South River  
St Mary, Perth Amboy  
St Matthew, Edison  
St Matthias, Somerset  
St Paul Apostle, Highland Park  
St Stephen, Perth Amboy

### **New Mexico**

San Antonio Padua, Penasco  
St Anthony, Dixon

### **New York**

Ascension, Elmhurst  
Mary Queen Heaven, Brooklyn  
OL Refuge, Bronx  
St James, Seaford  
St John Evangelist, Brooklyn  
St Mark, Brooklyn

### **North Carolina**

Christ the King, Kings Mountain  
St Mary, Shelby

### **Ohio**

St Monica, New Boston  
St Peter, Wheelersburg

### **Pennsylvania**

St Andrew, Drexel Hill  
St Rita, Munhall  
St Vincent de Paul, Minersville  
St Vincent de Paul, Hanover

### **Rhode Island**

St Ann, Cranston

### **South Carolina**

Holy Cross, Pickens

### **Texas**

St Elizabeth Ann Seton, Odessa

### **Virginia**

St Mary Immaculate Conception,  
Fredericksburg

### **Wisconsin**

Assumption of BVM, Somerset  
St Ann, Bayfield  
St Ann, Somerset  
St Francis, Red Cliff  
St Joseph, Bayfield  
St Louis, Washburn

### **West Virginia**

St Agnes, Shepherdstown  
St Alphonsus, Wheeling

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training@parishsoft.com

**Customer Support**

Hours: Mon-Fri, 9am to 7pm ET.  
866.930.4774 x2  
support@parishsoft.com

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## PARISHSOFT 101

Register today for one of our convenient teletraining classes, or arrange for a classroom trainer to come right to your location. For costs and teletraining dates, visit <http://www.parishsoft.com/training> or email [training@parishsoft.com](mailto:training@parishsoft.com).

- ACH Electronic Giving** Set up specific parish funds and member accounts for automated transfer and contribution postings.
- Extended Tuition** Manage school tuition and/or religious education billing fees; send statements; post payments, and more.
- Fundamentals** (a.k.a. Family Directory) Manage records, sacraments, workgroups, and reports.
- Ledger & Payables** Set up and manage your entire accounting process.
- Offering** Post contributions; manage pledge campaigns; generate statements and reports.
- Payroll** Handle employee accounts and pay cycle tasks.
- Religious Education** Set up your entire program; maintain student and class records; generate reports.
- Reports: InDepth** Build standard and custom reports.
- Time & Talent** Create and manage ministry groups; use auto-scheduler; post to the web.
- Web Solutions** Learn to administer your parish website, calendar, facility scheduler, and more on [ParishesOnline.com](http://ParishesOnline.com).

### Come and See ParishSOFT Close Up!

**Trade Shows and Events**

February 16 - 18, 2006  
Rosemont, IL  
Catholic Festival of Faith

February 17 - 19, 2006  
Washington, DC  
34th Annual East Coast  
Conference for Religious  
Education

March 31 - April 2, 2006  
Anaheim, CA  
Religious Education  
Congress



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